

**TOWN OF ABINGDON
COUNCIL WORK SESSION
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2012 – 6:30 P.M.
DOWNSTAIRS MEETING ROOM – MUNICIPAL BUILDING**

A Work session meeting of the Abingdon Town Council was held on Wednesday, December 19, 2012 at 6:30 p.m. in the downstairs meeting room of the Municipal Building.

A. ROLL CALL

Members of Council Present: Mayor Edward B. Morgan
Mr. Jason N. Berry
Mr. Richard E. Humphreys
Mr. Robert M. Howard

Absent: Mrs. Cathy Lowe, Vice Mayor

Administrative Staff: Gregory W. Kelly, Town Manager
Cecile M. Rosenbaum, Town Clerk
Debbie Icenhour, Town Attorney
Garrett Jackson, Asst. Town Manager/Dir. of Planning
John Dew, Dir. of Public Services/Construction
Mark Godbey, Town Treasurer

The following items were discussed by Council:

1. Mayor Morgan welcomed everyone and reported that Mrs. Lowe had contacted him and indicated that she would be unable to attend the meeting as her mother was ill and was being taken to the hospital.
2. Mr. Kelly reported that he had contacted officials with the Commission on Local Government (COLG), who are assembled to work with localities, currently considering or are involved in boundary adjustments, and indicated that they were only able to assist with mediation of a boundary change if both localities were agreeable to the mediation efforts. Mr. Kelly commented that if mediation efforts prove unsuccessful after three (3) months the issue is considered terminated and a locality cannot revive the issue for another twelve (12) months. Discussion ensued among Council and town staff regarding the next steps of negotiation with Washington County. The Council members agreed that the Town Manager would contact the Washington County Administrator's office to initiate setting up a meeting between the elected officials and staff of both localities previously designated to work on this issue.

3. Mr. Kelly commented on a meeting he had with Christy Parker, Economic Development Director for Washington County and officials from a private company considering Abingdon as a location for their business. Discussion ensued and Mr. Kelly noted that he would contact Ms. Parker to further discuss this issue and express some concerns the town officials and staff had relative to the size of the building and the area of town being considered.
4. John Dew, Director of Public Services and Construction reviewed a memo he had prepared for Council with regard to the revisions of the current Solid Waste Ordinance as it relates to trash cans and dumpsters for multi-family dwellings. Mr. Kelly recommended that key words in the revisions be changed from “must” to “may” and “shall be subject to discretion of the Town Manager” be added to provide for clarity of any issues/situations that may arise that may not be specifically addressed in the ordinance. Ms. Icenhour indicated that she would get the Ordinance in line for advertisement and public hearing but do to the holidays, the Ordinance would appear on the February agenda for consideration.
5. Mr. Dew commented on the Copenhaver property issue at 205 Preston Street, Abingdon relative to the issue of turning radius at the corner of Preston and Hagy Streets. Mr. Dew noted his reservations with placing a bollard or barrier type structure in the area as it creates an additional hazard to motorists. Discussion ensued about the wall on Ms. Copenhaver’s property and Council members agreed that they would like to visit the area as a group and would do so at 5:00 p.m. on Monday, January 7th prior to the Work Session Meeting.
6. Mr. Kelly reported that he and town staff had met on several occasions with Becky Caldwell, Director of the Virginia Highlands Festival relative to her plan to hold a concert event at Latture Field during the 2013 Festival. Mr. Kelly noted that the chosen musician by Ms. Caldwell had requests in his rider that would present a hardship on the town staff and town resources if it were to occur. Mr. Kelly further noted his concern for the financial burden of the concert and that the town was not in a position to provide any additional funding for the Festival. Council members recommended that Mr. Kelly send a letter to Ms. Caldwell setting forth the concerns with regard to the concert and confirm that the town was not in a position to provide any further financial funding above the Festival’s current fiscal year appropriation.
7. Mr. Kelly reported that he had met with Susan Howard of Advance Abingdon relative to her concerns with the Council’s agreement to suspend plans to renovate the downtown park. Mr. Kelly noted that Ms. Howard informed him that her agency had received a grant for this project and that funds from the grant had been spent on the design concept for the park as well as securing a muralist for the wall of the building adjacent to the park. Mr. Kelly indicated that he would proceed with moving the Kiwanis Pavilion structure to another location in town and get the concrete taken up, neither of which would compromise the uncertainty of the plans for the park. Mayor Morgan expressed his desire to see the mural project completed.
8. Mr. Kelly reported on a sewer/water line insurance that was being made available by the National League of Cities organization. Mr. Kelly noted the benefits of this type of insurance program and commented that he would have town staff investigate the program more thoroughly as well as initiate a meeting between the town and the Washington County Service Authority.
9. Mr. Howard reported on a recent traffic accident that occurred on the Exit 19 Southbound off ramp. Mr. Howard requested that town staff contact VDOT officials to request that they review this area and consider some additional safety measures to prevent further accidents on this ramp.
10. Mr. Humphreys commented on the Tree Commission’s action toward a contract group that trimmed trees on Valley Street without prior authorization from the town. Discussion ensued

about legal remedies that could be sought against the company for the unauthorized trimming. Mr. Humphreys reported that the Tree Commission had discussed placing a small park in the area between Russell Road and Old Russell Road.

11. Mr. Kelly commented on a recent meeting he had with a dissatisfied town sewer customer. Mr. Kelly noted that the customer may come to the January 7th meeting to report on the issue to Council.

Mayor Morgan declared the meeting adjourned.

Edward B. Morgan, Mayor

Cecile M. Rosenbaum, Town Clerk